

3. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the overall zirconium compound content is from 0.5 to 10% by weight.

4. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the one or more water-soluble zirconium compounds is selected from the group consisting of ammonium zirconium carbonate, zirconium acetoacetate, zirconium hydroxychloride, zirconium orthosulfate, zirconium propionate and potassium zirconium phosphate.

5. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the one or more water-soluble zirconium compounds is ammonium zirconium carbonate.

6. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the one or more zirconium compounds are added to the coating composition as solids and/or as aqueous solutions.

7. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating composition includes at least one additive, wherein the at least one additive is selected from the group consisting of film formers, pigments, fillers, thickeners, dispersants, wetting agents, preservatives, emulsifiers and defoamers.

8. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein, based on the overall amount of the monomers, the copolymers comprise:

a) from 70 to 99.7% by weight of one or more free-radically polymerizable olefinically unsaturated compounds selected from the group consisting of acrylates and methacrylates of (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>) monoalcohols, vinylaromatic monomers, vinyl esters of (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>) alkanemonocarboxylic acids, vinyl halides,  $\alpha,\beta$ -monoolefinically unsaturated nitriles and alkyl esters of monoolefinically unsaturated dicarboxylic acids,

b) from 0.3 to 10% by weight of one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of  $\alpha,\beta$ -monoolefinically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids, dicarboxylic acids, and their amides or N-substituted amides, and

c) from 0 to 20% by weight of compounds selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl-containing monomers, acetylacetoxyl-containing monomers, monomers containing epoxide groups, monomers containing silane groups, nitrogen-containing monomers and monomers containing keto groups.

9. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the one or more binders comprise at least one additive selected from the group consisting of emulsifiers, protective colloids, additives, auxiliaries and noncopolymerizable crosslinkers.

10. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous coating composition is a composition selected from the group consisting of an exterior paint, an interior paint, a roadmarking paint, a primer, a wood coating, exterior render and interior plaster.

11. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the aqueous coating composition is a composition selected from the group consisting of adhesives, pastes, putties, sealing compounds and pressure compensation coatings for exterior insulation and finish systems.

12. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the coating composition includes unadditived binders.

Please add new claims 13 through 22 as follows:

13. (New) An aqueous coating composition comprising:  
at least one binder, wherein the at least one binder includes polymer dispersions based on one or more homopolymers and/or copolymers; and at least one water-soluble zirconium compound.

14. (New) The aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13, wherein the at least one zirconium compound is present in an amount up to 50% by weight, calculated as zirconium oxide and based on the at least one binder present in the coating composition.

15. (New) The aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13, wherein the at least one zirconium compound is selected from the group consisting of ammonium zirconium carbonate, zirconium acetoacetate, zirconium hydroxychloride, zirconium orthosulfate, zirconium propionate and potassium zirconium phosphate.

16. (New) The aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13, wherein based on the amount of monomers, the copolymers comprise:

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- a) from 70 to 99.7% by weight of one or more free-radically polymerizable olefinically unsaturated compounds selected from the group consisting of acrylates and methacrylates of (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>) monoalcohols, vinylaromatic monomers, vinyl esters of (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>12</sub>) alkanemonocarboxylic acids, vinyl halides,  $\alpha,\beta$ -monoolefinically unsaturated nitriles and alkyl esters of monoolefinically unsaturated dicarboxylic acids,
- b) from 0.3 to 10% by weight of one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of  $\alpha,\beta$ -monoolefinically unsaturated monocarboxylic acids, dicarboxylic acids, and their amides or N-substituted amides, and

c) from 0 to 20% by weight of compounds selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl-containing monomers, acetylacetoxyl-containing monomers, monomers containing epoxide groups, monomers containing silane groups, nitrogen-containing monomers and monomers containing keto groups.

17. (New) A paint comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13.

18. (New) A primer comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13.

19. (New) A wood coating comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13.

20. (New) An exterior render comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13.

21. (New) An interior plaster comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13.

22. (New) A compound comprising the aqueous coating composition as claimed in claim 13, wherein the compound is selected from the group consisting of adhesives, pastes, putties, sealing compounds and pressure compensation coatings for exterior insulation and finish systems